

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 RSR-01 /108 W

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R 021646Z JUL 73

FM AMCONSUL NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4363

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L NASSAU 871

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV PINT PFOR PINR BF

SUBJ: HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR BAHAMAS IN LONDON

1. ALVIN RUDOLPH BRAYNEN, WHO HAS HAD A VARIED CAREER IN BAHAMIAN POLITICS, WAS NAMED JUNE 29 AS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE BAHAMAS IN LONDON. HE LEFT FOR LONDON JULY 1 AND WILL TAKE HIS POST OFFICIALLY JULY 10.

2. BRAYNEN WAS BORN DECEMBER 6, 1904 IN ELEUTHERA, EDUCATED IN THE BAHAMAS AND BECAME AN OUT ISLANDS SCHOOL TEACHER. ENTERING POLITICS ALLIED WITH THE "BAY STREET BOYS" WING OF THE UBP, BRAYNEN SERVED IN THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY FROM 1935 TO 1972, THE LAST SIX YEARS AS AN INDEPENDENT. HE SERVED TWO TERMS AS DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE. IN 1967 HE ENTERED THE STAND-OFF BETWEEN THE UBP AND THE NEW BLACK PLP AND SUPPORTED THE LATTER. AS A REWARD, HE BECAME SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE, A POST HE HELD UNTIL 1972. BRAYNEN LOST HIS SEAT IN THE 1972 GENERAL ELECTIONS. AT THAT TIME IT WAS WIDELY RUMORED THAT HE WOULD RECEIVE A HIGH APPOINTIVE POST FROM THE PLP. BRAYNEN IS A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE AND HAS SERVED ON MANY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES. HE AND HIS WIFE ENA HAVE TWO CHILDREN.

3. COMMENT: BRAYNEN IS DISLIKED BY THE REMNANTS OF THE OLD-GUARD EXPATRIATE COMMUNITY. BRAYNEN HIMSELF IS WHITE,
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AND MANY FEEL HE BASED HIS PROMINENCE AND PERSONAL WEALTH ON

ASSOCIATION WITH THE CONSERVATIVE WING OF THE UDP UNTIL HE
MADE HIS "SWITCH IN TIME" TO GUARANTEE THE PLP MAJORITY IN
1967. IN RECENT YEARS BRAYNEN HAS ATTACKED BRITISH EXPATRI-
ATES IN THE BAHAMAS AS "SPOILED AND OBNOXIOUS" AND SAID THAT
HE WOULD BE "HAPPY TO SEE THE LAST OF THE ENGLISHMAN RIGHT
NOW". SUCH STATEMENTS REINFORCE LOCAL WHITE OPINION THAT HE
IS A RENEGADE BEING USED BY THE PLP IN A SORT OF REVERSE
TOKENISM.
SPEAR

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 JUL 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973NASSAU00871
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS TOKENISM
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: NASSAU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730758/aaaabquu.tel
Line Count: 71
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15-Jan-2002 by smithrj>; APPROVED <05-Feb-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR BAHAMAS IN LONDON
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PFOR, PINR, BF
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005